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Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

With you and countless others around the world, I share feelings of revulsion and outrage at the news reports which have exposed sexual sin and cover ups by priests and bishops in America and other parts of the world. With deep shame I apologize for the sins of the clergy.

As difficult as the coming days may be, this evil must be exposed to protect children and vulnerable adults from predators and so that the Church may be purified to offer a true witness to the importance of chastity in God's plan for human happiness.

This month marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pope Paul VI's letter *Humanae Vitae*, which restated the constant teaching of the faith about openness to new life (you can read the text on the diocesan website). The letter prophetically warned about the consequences of failure to live out God's plan for human sexuality. Today's crisis reveals that members of the clergy, entrusted with teaching the Gospel truth, chose to disregard it in their own lives.

In the face of these manifest evils, we recall the words of Jesus: "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting" (Mark 9:20). As the Body of Christ, the Church unites its efforts to the Lord's saving work. I invite everyone in the diocese to make each Friday a day of fasting (as your health permits) and abstinence from meat, along with prayer, in atonement for sin and to beg God's grace to convert us and the world.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Stephen Jensen